

CHARLESTON

FIRE DEPARTMENT



Fire Sprinkler Controls George Street Apartment Fire

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Charleston, SC (August 2, 2014): On 08/01/2014, units with the City of Charleston Fire Department were dispatched at 5:39 PM to an automatic fire alarm at 21 George Street. Fire department personnel arrived on scene and detected a burning odor and observed water flowing from underneath a door to an apartment. The call was upgraded to a possible structure fire bringing additional resources from the City of Charleston Fire Department, St. Andrews Fire Department, Charleston County EMS, and Charleston Police Department.

Fire department personnel evacuated residents from the building and forced entry into the apartment where the water was coming from. A single fire sprinkler head located in the apartment contained the fire in the kitchen area of the apartment. Fire personnel proceeded to finish fire extinguishment and check the area for any fire extension and then controlled the water from the open sprinkler head.

“Without the fire sprinkler system we would have had a substantial event, damaged multiple apartments, and displaced numerous families,” said Fire Marshal Mike Julazadeh. “The fire sprinkler system was part of the critical life safety components of this building. In this case, a single fire sprinkler head operated and controlled the fire event until the fire department could arrive and mitigate any remaining hazards. Management is working to repair water damage and restore minimal smoke and fire damage.”



The Charleston Fire Department Fire Marshal Division responded to investigate the fire and determined the fire to be accidental. The fire originated on the kitchen stovetop within an apartment unit. The investigators determined that a new tenant was in the process of moving into the apartment and placed combustible items on the surface of the stove. A control knob to the stovetop was inadvertently activated, possibly during the moving process, and ignited the combustible items on the surface of the stove.

The Charleston Fire Department would like to remind citizens of the following:

- Never store combustible materials on a stove or cooking surface.
- Always maintain working smoke alarms in your home – this will improve safety of residents and it may also provide notification to neighbors or adjoining residents in your absence.

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